Supply of F-16 Aircraft to Pakistan

3159. SHRI MOTILAL VORA:
SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY:
SHRI MANGANI LAL MANDAL:
SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the US has decided to supply F-16 aircrafts to Pakistan;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have taken up this issue with the US particularly when the India-Pakistan relations started showing positive rights;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the response of the US thereto:

(e) whether the US had offered F-16 and F-18 fighter planes and cooperation in civilian nuclear energy to India; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and the response of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) The US Administration informed India on March 25,2005 of its intention to supply F-16 aircrafts to Pakistan.

(b) No further details have been made public and the proposal has yet to be approved by the US Congress.

(c) Prime Minister expressed his disappointment to President Bush at this decision during a telephone conversation on 25 March 2005. This matter had been taken up by External Affairs Minister with the visiting Secretary of State. Dr. Condoleezza Rice on 16 March 2005. It had been earlier raised in December 2004 in discussions with U.S. Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld during his visit to India.

(d) Government conveyed its concern that such supplies would erode the goodwill for the United States in India. It would also have repercussions on the India-Pakistan dialogue that is currently at a sensitive juncture. The US Government's response has been that it values its relationship with India and is committed to taking it forward. As far as India-Pakistan relations were concerned, while the US has an arms supply relationship with Pakistan, it was supportive of the India-Pakistan dialogue.

(e) and (f) On March 25, 2005, the US Under Secretary of Defence conveyed that US companies have received approval from the US Administration to respond to the Indian Request for Information (RFI) for the Multi Role Combat Aircraft.

Discussions were held during the visit of Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice on 16 March 2005 on the need for a positive US response to India's growing energy demands, including nuclear energy. During EAM's visit to Washington DC. on April 13-14,2005, India and the U.S. announced an Energy dialogue to be led by U.S. Energy Secretary Bodman and Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission Dr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia. The three main components are: civil nuclear energy, hydrocarbons and cleaner technologies.

Government's Reaction over Nepal issue

3160. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) Government's reaction to the latest political developments in Nepal;

(b) whether Government are contemplating to review the existing bilateral treaties between the two countries;

(c) if so, the details thereof and what action has so far been taken in that direction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) Government of India is deeply concerned about the situation in Nepal following the dismissal of the multi-party government and imposition of emergency in the country on February 1,2005. We have called for the early restoration to multiparty democracy, immediate release of political leaders and lifting of restrictions on their constitutional rights and removal of media censorship. We have stressed the need and importance of forging a national consensus between the two constitutional forces, namely political parties and constitutional monarchy, effectively deal with the political and economic challenges facing the country;

(b) and (c) At present, there is no proposal under consideration to review the existing bilateral treaties between India and Nepal.